# Parkville College Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school’s policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Parkville College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked. The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school’s values.

## Scope

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

## Policy

#### School profile

Parkville College (PC) is a registered specialist Victorian Government School that provides education to students who are, or have been, detained in custody. Our school campuses are situated within Youth Justice Custodial Services, overseen by the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), Secure Care sites, overseen by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), we also have a Flexible Learning Centre campus based in the community. We work in unison with DJCS and DFFH custodial staff to deliver education to all young people within these settings.

Most students of PC have experienced attachment issues, due to early experiences of neglect, abuse, abrupt separation from family or carers, frequently changing caregivers, or lack of trusting relationships with caregivers, resulting in a lack of basic trust. Regardless of age and background, students with an attachment issue have the ability to create healthy attachment in a positive therapeutic environment.

At PC, students are diligently supported by a team of dedicated teaching and support staff, who work towards the full development of the human personality. We assist our students to develop whilst detained, to enable them to reintegrate into society. We don’t expect our students on leaving detention to have miraculously transformed without having shown them alternative ways of viewing the world.

#### School values, philosophy and vision

At PC our vision is for every student to have high expectations of their future.We know children can struggle to achieve their personal best if they are not safe from abuse. At this school our values guide the decisions and behaviours of all members of our school community, including in relation to child safety. Our values are:

* Providing **empowering education**
* Demonstrating **Unconditional Positive Regard**
* Having **high expectations** of all our students
* Practising **cultural safety**
* Teaching through **modelling and demonstrating**

Our philosophy of education is that every child should be provided with a culturally safe and relevant education that is directed towards their full development and equips them to achieve their goals. Our job is to create the conditions within the learning environment to achieve this.

#### Wellbeing and Engagement strategies

PC has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated.

The pedagogical framework of teaching and learning at PC is outlined in the Parkville College Model. This is a therapeutic education model that promotes student wellbeing and engagement through practice that is culturally responsive and based on the foundational principles of unconditional positive regard, inclusive education, trauma informed practice, and attachment theory.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

*Universal*

* + - * Provide curriculum that is inclusive and engaging based on individual student’s needs and interests
* The right to access education that is designed toward the full development of the individual is guided by inclusive classrooms
* Develop culturally responsive and trauma informed practice that is reflective and sensitive to student behaviours, providing space, options and opportunities for student development
* Deliver curriculum and educational activities that are predictable and consistent, that encourage students to self-regulate their emotions and learning opportunities
* Model pedagogical approaches as part of professional practice when engaging with all members of the school community
* PC staff will engage in regular outreach and communication with students outside the classroom
* Create a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued

*Targeted*

* Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Aboriginal Education Program documentation for further information
* we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee and migrant background through our culturally responsive practice approaches. We also have supports for our Māori and Pacific Islander and African Diaspora students through out Umoja and Leotaha Cultural Education Programs
* we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department’s policy on LGBTIQ Student Support

*Individual*

* Apply ‘Unconditional Positive Regard’ theory to all interactions with students by consistently treating students kindly, genuinely, respectfully and with complete acceptance
* Maintain a value position that displays empathy, honesty, sincerity and congruence
* Develop a holistic knowledge and understanding of individual students to create learning environments and relationships that are culturally safe, and trauma informed
* Create a shared and consistent approach toward trustworthy, stable and secure relationships with students
* ‘Diffuse discord’and develop good rapport
* Elicit change talk with students
* PC will provide positive feedback on student progress to a student’s nominated person

DJCS and DFFH are responsible for ensuring the safety, care and welfare of young people within custodial and secure services. (CYF Act 2005 s.483)

PC, DJCS & DFFH staff share a collaborative relationship to ensure education is delivered toward the full development of the child, and toward the reduction of offending behaviours.

#### Identifying students in need of support

PC is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Parkville College will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

* personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
* attendance records
* academic performance
* observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
* attendance, detention and suspension data
* engagement with families

#### Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school’s Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

* participate fully in their education
* feel safe, secure and happy at school
* learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation
* express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

* participate fully in their educational program
* display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
* respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

#### Student behavioural expectations and management

PC believes that behavioural encouragement is an essential component of education that should be supported within a respectful environment that provides unconditional positive regard for its learners. PC believes that positive behaviour occurs and is learnt within relationships that are secure, trusting, consistent and reliable. Staff practice is centred within attachment theory and trauma informed practice, emphasising the development of positive relationships and modeling in order to shape student behaviour. Parkville College shall ensure inclusion and promote and model positive student engagement within all classroom activities and interactions. Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Parkville College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Parkville College will never use exclusion. Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

For further clarification, refer to the *Behavioural Encouragement Policy.*

#### Engaging with families

Parkville College values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child’s learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

* ensuring that all parents/carers have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
* maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents/carers and staff.
* involving students’ families and communities in decision making around their education
* coordinating resources and services from the community for families
* including families in the development of individual plans for students.

#### Evaluation

Parkville College will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students, so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

* student survey data
* incidents data
* school reports
* attendance and absence data

Parkville College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

## Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

* Available publicly on our school’s website
* Included in staff induction processes
* Included as annual reference in school newsletter
* Stored on Compass
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## Further information and resources

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

* [Attendance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/policy)
* [Student Engagement](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-engagement/policy)
* [Child Safe Standards](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy)
* [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/supporting-students-out-home-care/policy)
* [Students with Disability](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy)
* [LGBTIQ Student Support](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy)
* [Behaviour - Students](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/policy)
* [Suspensions](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy)
* [Expulsions](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy)
* [Restraint and Seclusion](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

* Child Safety Policy
* Bullying Prevention Policy
* Inclusion and Diversity Policy
* Statement of Values and School Philosophy

## Review cycle and Approval

This policy was last updated on June 2022 and is scheduled for review in June 2023.

Consultation on this policy is mandatory. Consultation has occurred with the following:

* Youth Leadership Councils – June 2022
* School Council – November 2021